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PARTNERSHIP IN EQUITY

MONTANA'S VOCATIONAL EDUCATION EQUITY NEWSLETTER

winter 1996/NO.32

CELEBRATE THINK PURPLE WEEK ! 1996
FEBRUARY 11-17

Once again Montana schools are preparing to celebrate **"Think Purple Week!"** The mixing of the color blue (formerly reserved for boys) and the color pink (formerly reserved for girls) makes the color purple. Purple is internationally recognized as an equity color, and many organizations and programs use purple as a symbol of equity.

During the Holidays, I spent some time wandering through the toy section of a local store. My purpose was twofold; finding the right Christmas presents for the kids in my life, and taking a good hard look at what types of toys are available for kids.

You may be thinking "Get a Life!" But believe me it's fun and amazing to see all the different things available, as well as a very telling social commentary.

The toy sections were clearly distinguished by color. You guessed it, pink for girls and blue for boys! The power of subliminal suggestion is a force to be reckoned with.

And even more, the sections were not only distinguished by color, but by physical space. "Girl's" toys on one side of the isle, while "boys" toys were on the other. Not unlike "girls" in one line and "boys" in another.

For us to not recognize the impact of the social environment on even the youngest of children is naive, and yet, it all seems so harmless!

As we nurture and carefully guide children through the maze of social development, we do so with love and compassion. When we ignore the simplest of social barriers, we in effect limit opportunities and the full spectrum of choice.

Using pink and blue to distinguish between "types" of toys should not be the end of the world or a call to mass protest against the retailer. It is a opportunity that adults can use to assure that children have the full range of choice. Take the time to walk through the entire toy section. Where the child ends up is perhaps, not as important as the child knowing the full range of possibilities.

As far as physically separating "girl's" toys and "boy's" toys, isn't it time we all took a look at what we can accomplish together, as opposed to what we can accomplish on opposite sides of the isle? No one ever said it was supposed to be easy, but working together we will accomplish so much more.

Have a great New Year, and **"Think Purple!"**

EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS (EYH) is a program designed to encourage girls of middle school age to consider careers in mathematics and science. Each year throughout Montana hundreds of young women have an opportunity to meet, listen and dialogue with professional women, mostly from scientific/mathematics careers about their professions. It is an excellent opportunity for exposure to ideas, stories and people of varied backgrounds and interests.

With the sponsorship of the OPI Gender Equity program, in 1996 six EYH conferences are scheduled throughout the state at the following sites:

BILLINGS
Open to grades 6-12
PLACE: Rocky Mountain College
DATE: April 13, 1996
CONTACT: Nancy Downing
657-1050

BOZEMAN
Open to grades 6-12
PLACE: Montana State University
DATE: April 13, 1996
CONTACT: Stacy Jovick
222-3407

BUTTE
Open to grades 6-12
PLACE: Montana Tech
DATE: March 2, 1996
CONTACT: Eletha Suttey
496-4442

GREAT FALLS
Open to grades 6-8
PLACE: University of Great Falls
DATE: March 9, 1996
CONTACT: Lee Niebuhr
727-2200

KALISPELL
Open to Grades 6-12
PLACE: Flathead Valley Community College
DATE: March 30, 1996
CONTACT: Jean Robbins
755-8600 - work 755-6395 - home

MISSOULA
Open to Grades 6-12
PLACE: Hellgate High School
DATE: April 19, 1996
CONTACT: Cindy Babon
549-9835 Expanding Your Horizons (EYH)

March is National Women's History Month

SO...

-Plan a project, activity or contest about women in history
-Do research on community pioneer women
-Invite a women who is making history now to speak
-Buy a book about women for the library
-Talk to your grandmother, or your mother about what life was like when they were children and start a family book
-Make sure that women's contributions are actively part of the curriculum all year long!

It is never too late to be what you might have been

George Eliot

Partnership in Equity
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To submit an article, or for more information
call: 406-444-6570
FAX. 406-444-1469
Email :bbird@oche.montana.edu

Funded by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act of 1990.

Dispatches - From the Gender Equity Specialist

The holidays brought a deep breath - sigh of relief- to the gender equity office after an exceptionally exciting and busy fall season.

Grants to support ***Gender/Ethnic Expectations of Student Achievement (GESA)*** training were awarded in September to six school districts: Harlem, Helena, Hamilton, Havre, Kalispell, and Billings. Four of these sites have new GESA facilitators on their teams. The facilitator training was held in Helena during June, 1995, by Dr. Melissa Keyes, the Wisconsin Title IV Sex Equity Coordinator. The new facilitators are bringing great energy and enthusiasm to the GESA program in Montana.

The training series this fall included ***"Investigation Training: Handling Complaints and Investigations of Sexual Harassment in Schools"*** and ***"Training for Trainers - Prevention is the Best Strategy: Sexual Harassment in Our Schools"***, cosponsored with The Equity Institute, and ***"Title IX Coordinator Training: Fulfilling the Spirit and the Letter of Title IX"***. All workshops were well attended and enthusiastically received.

As always, your requests for training, resources, and information are welcome. For more information, call the Gender Equity office: Kathy Bramer, 444-1952, or George Burns. 444-2410

EXTRA! EXTRA!

On May 2 through 4, 1996, a Gender Equity Conference will be held in Great Falls at the Heritage Inn. This event will be cosponsored by OPI and other agencies and organizations working in the equity arena. The focus will include equity training and information updates, reflections on the history of the equity movement, and strategies for future change. Watch for registration information out soon on METNET and in the mail.

On July 21 through 24, 1996, the National Coalition of Sex Equity in Education will hold its seventeenth annul conference, "*EQUITY IN EDUCATION: Politics, Practices, Possibilities*" at the Hyatt Regency in Princeton, New Jersey. *Montana's own Pat Callbeck Harper* is the current president of NCSEE, and is working tirelessly on monitoring federal legislation as it pertains to equity in education. Go Pat!!!

For more information on the conference, or on becoming a member of NCSEE, contact Kathy Bramer, 444-1952, or Becky Bird, 444-0317.

Looking for Carl Perkins Gender Equity Credits?

Become a part of the action to infuse and promote gender equity in Montana schools! You are invited to participate in a statewide celebration of equity. It's fun, and it's easy to do. Plus, it's a great way to get your Carl Perkins Gender Equity Certificate!

Here's what you do-

Submit a brief proposal (ONE page) that addresses the following points:

1. WHO will develop the program activities?
2. WHO will be served by the program activities?
3. WHAT will be the equity issue/issues addressed?
4. WHAT activities will be developed and implemented to address the issue/issues?
5. WHAT are the objectives of the program activities?
6. WHAT are the intended outcomes and HOW will they be evaluated?

For each participant *requesting* Gender Equity certification, a log documenting ACTIVE participation in planning and implementing **"THINK PURPLE WEEK"** activities must be provided.

Activities must be evaluated by pre-post testing, student/participant comment or other means that provides feedback to planners. Program follow-up summary is required before certificates can be mailed. To receive equity certificates prior to the March 1, 1996 Perkins grant deadline, summaries must be received no later than February 22, 1995. (Faxes o.k.) For more information call, 444-0317.

Suggested activities to include: activities that address the current needs of your school/district, nontraditional career fair, poster contest, essay contest, displays, special guest speakers, training for students, women's history projects, develop school/district equity strategies and plans, start a local equity network, Expanding Your Horizons, etc. Be creative and most of all, HAVE FUN!!!

FEBRUARY 11-17

TEACHER TRAINING

"A WOMEN'S PLACE IS...IN THE CURRICULUM"

Women's History Strategies and Resources
Teacher Training workshop

July 14-18, 1996, in Sonoma County California

Conducted by the
National Women's History Project

For more information call
the National Women's History Project: 707-838-6000

MONTANA STATE EQUITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

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For more information about the State Equity Advisory Council contact Becky Bird, 406-444-0317

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